

CHARITON COURIER.

C. P. VANDIVER, ED. AND PROP.

KEYTESVILLE, - MISSOURI.

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Chief George's Story of the "Lost Lake" at Fort Yukon, Alaska.

The winter of 1888-89 I wintered in the Star Hill City, 350 miles above St. Michael, on the Yukon river, loaded with oil for Dawson City. We left winter quarters the first day of June, '89, arrived at Fort Yukon the 10th, and wishing to hire a native pilot I applied to Mr. Fred Gash, the trader for the N. A. T. & T. Co., who recommended "Uncle" George as a reliable man to pilot us over the flats, some 70 miles to Circle City, as this part of the river is full of islands and treacherous channels, and blind chutes, strong water and gravel bars. "Uncle" George is chief of the remnant of the one lone band of Indians that has lived at Fort Yukon for centuries. I found him to be a man of large frame and commanding appearance, with a soft speech and mild eyes, but suffering with a severe cold. He said he was not able to work. I engaged him to go with us and sit and look on and see that we did not get lost. We made the run to Circle City in 24 hours, and as I had taken a fancy to "Uncle" George I invited him to go to Dawson with us, which he consented to do. I had often wondered how these Yukon flats were formed. It is some 400 miles from where the river first enters them through a narrow gorge to where the Yukon again enters the Rampart bluffs. These flats extend from 70 to 150 miles in width, and form a wonderful basin, filled with islands, which are covered with fine spruce timber.

From Circle City the course of the river runs due north and enters the Arctic circle, where in June "the mid-night sun" can be seen in all its glory sliding along the northern horizon to the east. From Fort Yukon the river runs southeast for 300 miles, and then enters the mountains. In talking with "Uncle" George I told him that I thought the flats were once a great lake. He replied, "Yes," and then told me the following tradition: "When my great-great-great-grandfather was a little boy a great many Indians lived on the banks of a big lake, which covered all the country beyond the Yukon flats for many days' travel. Our people lived on this lake and caught plenty of fish and all kinds of game was plentiful; not much snow or cold weather. One hot day there was a great noise like the firing of big guns, and columns of black smoke filled the air and made our people sick and many died. All of a sudden great waves leaped from the lake to the shore and drowned and swallowed up men, women and children. What few that escaped were badly frightened, and thought the Great Spirit was very mad at them. A strong current commenced to run in the lake and the water fell very fast. It was not many moons before the lake was almost dry. After a long time some Indians, who had been out hunting, returned and told about the mountains splitting open. A big river was running out from this once mighty lake."

From what I could gather from "Uncle" George's story there must have been a great upheaval or earthquake at the foot of the flats where the Yukon now enters the Ramparts, composed of bluffs several thousand feet high, with an opening not to exceed one mile in width, and the face of these shore rocks show a well-defined worn water-mark, which has worn to its present depth during the past century.

This is the story of "Uncle" George's "Lost Lake" of the Yukon river.

I asked "Uncle" George if he had ever found any gold. He said when he was a young man he once found plenty of gold. To my question, "Where?" he told me the following story:

"Two young men and myself went on a long hunt before the snow came. We had four dogs and went up north of the Porcupine in the mountains to kill moose. When we had traveled 15 days we came to a nice valley between the mountains where we camped. We killed plenty of moose, deer

and bear. One day I went over the mountain and came to a little stream, and stooped down to get a drink of water, and while drinking I saw at the bottom plenty of gold nuggets as big as shot and bullets. I filled my tobacco pouch full and went back to camp, but did not tell my companions about it. On our return to Fort Yukon I told a Canadian trapper and trader about it. Nothing would do him but I should go with him and another man and show them where I found it. I did not want to go as winter was on and the snow would be deep before we could get there. After we were gone six days a fearful snow-storm came up and it turned awful cold. One fearful cold night came, and next morning I was about frozen. My companions no get up; both frozen to death, as were also two of the four dogs. I took the two remaining dogs and started for home. I had a bad time; both feet were frozen and all my toes came off, and I lay in bed all winter; had to eat dog before I got back. I no go any more to hunt gold."

"Uncle" George says since so many white men came the Indians all get sick and die. La grippe and consumption seem to be the fatal diseases that are filling the grave-yards at the villages on the Yukon river. The above I copied from my "Log Book." D. C. BASEY, Brunswick, Mo.

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CHAMP CLARK says that by the open door policy is meant "free trade in spots"—whenever we can dig the other fellow. Free trade with China, free trade with other countries, but custom duties if you come our way. Stingy advantage, see? That's why the proposed tariff discrimination against Porto Rico, one of our own possessions, one of our weak neighbors. Covetousness, selfishness; a manifestation of the spirit of imperialism in its disposition to dominate over the helpless.

Much is printed nowadays in the advertisements of attorneys as to the time required to obtain a patent, but the opinion of the commissioner of patents ought to be conclusive on this subject. In an interview he said: "The shortest period in which a patent can be secured is seven weeks, and it can be done in that time only by the attorney for the claimant conceding practically all the objections of this office."

SELF-GOVERNMENT could hardly come easy to the Filipinos. It would undoubtedly be some time before they could hit upon a plan for governing Sulu outside the constitution.



He Giveth His Loved Ones Sleep.

From an Old Scrap-Book.

He sees when the footsteps falter, when their hearts grow weak and faint; He marks when their strength is failing, and listens to each complaint; He bids them rest for a season, for the path has grown too steep; And folded in fair green pastures, "He giveth His loved ones sleep."

Like weary worn-out children, they sigh for the daylight's close. He knows that they oft are longing for home and its sweet repose, So he calls them in from their labors ere the shadows around them creep, And silently watching o'er them, "He giveth His loved ones sleep."

He giveth it, Oh! so gently! as a mother will hush to rest The babe that she softly pillows so tenderly on her breast. Forgotten now are the trials and sorrows that made them weep; For with many a soothing promise, "He giveth His loved ones sleep."

He giveth it! Friends, the dearest care never this boon bestow; But He touches the drooping eye-lids and placid the features grow. Their foes may gather around them, and storms may round them sweep, But, guarding them safe from danger, "He giveth his loved ones sleep."

All dread of the distant future, all fears that oppressed today, Like mists that clear in the sunlight have noiselessly passed away,

Nor call nor clamor can rouse them from slumbers so pure and deep,

For only His voice can reach them, who "giveth His loved ones sleep."

Weep not their toils are over, weep not that their race is run. God grant we may rest as calmly when our work, like theirs, is done!

Till then we would yield with gladness our treasures to Him to keep,

And rejoice in the sweet assurance—"He giveth His loved ones sleep."

—Columbia Herald.

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WHAT has become of the bill introduced by Senator Cullom months ago to amend the interstate commerce law? The railways, the commission and the people are all crying for it, but nothing is heard from the pigeon hole where it rests.

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